PARTISAN REVIEW

A Bi-Monthly of Revolutionary Literature
Published by the John Reed Club of New York

VOLUME I, NO. 1 FEBRUARY-MARCH 1934

COVER DESIGN *Elroy Webber*

EDITORIAL STATEMENT

TWO SKETCHES *Grace Lumpkin* 3

IN A COFFEE POT *Alfred Hayes* 12

STUDS LONIGAN *James T. Farrell* 16

THE SHEEP DIP *Ben Field* 24

POEM *Edwin Rolfe* 32

DEATH OF A SHOP *Arthur Pense* 35

FOUR POEMS *Joseph Freeman* 44

THE ANATOMY OF LIBERALISM *Wallace Phelp* 47

BOOKS *Obed Brooks, Granville Hicks, Philip Rahv, Waldo Tell* 52

JOHN REED CLUB NOTES 64

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Contributors meet with the editors for:
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FICTION: Wednesdays 3:00-5:30
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EDITORIAL STATEMENT

PARTISAN REVIEW appears at a time when American literature is undergoing profound changes. The economic and political crisis of capitalism, the growth of the revolutionary movement the world over, and the successful building of socialism in the Soviet Union have deeply affected American life, thought and art. They have had far-reaching effects not only upon the political activities of writers and artists, but upon their writing and thinking as well. For the past four years the movement to create a revolutionary art, which for a decade was confined to a small group, has spread throughout the United States. A number of revolutionary magazines has sprung up which publish revolutionary fiction, poetry and criticism. Some of these are issued by the John Reed Clubs.

PARTISAN REVIEW is the organ of the John Reed Club of New York, which is the oldest and largest Club in the country. As such it has a specific function to fulfill. It will publish the best creative work of its members as well as of non-members who share the literary aims of the John Reed Club.

We propose to concentrate on creative and critical literature, but we shall maintain a definite viewpoint—that of the revolutionary working class. Through our specific literary medium we shall participate in the struggle of the workers and sincere intellectuals against imperialist war, fascism, national and racial oppression, and for the abolition of the system which breeds these evils. The defense of the Soviet Union is one of our principal tasks.

We shall combat not only the decadent culture of the exploiting classes but also the debilitating liberalism which at times seeps into our writers through the pressure of class-alien forces. Nor shall we forget to keep our own house in order. We shall resist every attempt to cripple our literature by narrow-minded, sectarian theories and practices.

We take this opportunity to greet the various magazines of revolutionary literature already in the field, especially the *New Masses* whose appearance as a weekly, like the present issuance of PARTISAN REVIEW, is evidence of the growth of the new within the old.

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TWO SKETCHES

Grace Lumpkin

THE CONVERSION OF BOBBIE RAWLINS

DURING THE TIME when Elmer Jackson and his crowd were making money out of the taxpayers of our county, at the time when the taxpayers were beginning to wake up to what was going on, suddenly there sprung up a great religious revival in and around our city.

Elmer Jackson, President of the Merchants National Bank, Jim Peabody, County Treasurer, Ed Ramsey, our Mayor, and the others belonging to the ring, gave money for the revivals. They urged people at church, at schools, and in the newspapers to support the religious revival that was sweeping over the country. They spoke about God and eternal salvation.

There were three separate and different revivals going on at the same time, and they kept up until the money coming from the Jackson crowd didn't come any more, because they were indicted, though they were all freed in the end.

Mr. Peasner's revival is still going, and is growing every day, and the thing which made him so popular at first, and drew the right sort of people to him was that he got Bobbie Rawlins to join up with him.

Down in the parts of town where Negroes live and in the factory districts they had two revivalists, like Billy Sunday, one for Negroes and one for whites, carrying on meetings. And people came in flocks to hear them, for anything that took their minds off the troubles of the depression and the bad state of the county was welcome. People put their pennies or two-bits willingly into the collections to help keep the Evangelists with us.

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Out our way, at the churches which were attended by people who lived in bungalows they owned themselves—except for the mortgage—or two-story houses they rented, there was a woman revivalist, somewhat more moderate than the Billy Sunday kind. She preached the four-square gospel, which took people's minds off their mortgages and high taxes and turned them toward God, and in this way God did a favor for Elmer Jackson and his crowd, so their money which was helping to pay for the Evangelists was not wasted.

Uptown where the rich people lived, in a building which was a high-class hotel until the depression made it close up, a man named Mr. Peasner started what he called the College of King Arthur. It was for Nordics only, and was based on Mr. Peasner's knowledge of the Sanskrit language, and his pituitary gland, and on God.

Once, long ago, Mr. Peasner said, when we were squirming lizards in cosmic mud we were just squirming lizards. But as the lizards developed into Nordics their tails changed into pituitary glands, and those Nordics who were very highly developed had, at the end of their pituitary glands a radio eye. Mr. Peasner was one of those at the end of whose pituitary gland a radio eye had developed. Anyone who possessed this radio eye was very close to God. He could talk with the dead, to people from the lost Atlantis, and other dead. Well, almost any Nordic with a pituitary gland might be able to talk with the dead in general, but only one with the radio eye could talk to the dead who had graduated to the realms of Higher Frequency. Mr. Peasner could talk with the dead who had gone to realms of Higher Frequency. They talked to him in Sanskrit. His secretary could understand Sanskrit when Mr. Peasner spoke it to him, while communing with the dead, but he could not speak it, nor write it. So Mr. Peasner talked in Sanskrit to his secretary, who would take down the messages in plain English.

Now the dead who had gone to realms of Higher

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Frequency told Mr. Peasner that he must establish the College of King Arthur, and there he must teach Nordics. And the Nordics must have classes in the menace of the Jews and the menace of Communism. They must learn about how the Jews are trying to capture the country, and what Communism means and how to fight it. They must also learn how to fight Jews.

After Mr. Peasner's radio eye had got in touch with the realms of Higher Frequency, and received this message he received some money from Elmer Jackson and the others, who were the richest men, by this time, in the county, and started his College of King Arthur. The young men who attended were knights, and were called the Gold Shirts of America.

I had my friend, Jim Aldrich who, like me, is a hundred percent Nordic, though without a radio eye, go up and attend the college. The class in the menace of Communism begins like this, "The Communists have hot natures. They wish to abolish marriage and the home in order to gratify their own hot natures."

Many rich people came to the college, not only for the classes, but to consult Mr. Peasner, through his radio eye, on how to get richer, and on family troubles, such as how to get a divorce, or how to make up with the husband, or wife. But there were not enough rich people coming. A certain select group of people did not come often enough, and some did not come at all. Especially the young people in that group did not come. So Mr. Peasner decided to convert Bobbie Rawlins to the Radio Eye.

He had a seance, and it came out in the papers that were owned by the Elmer Jackson crowd that Bobbie Rawlins' dead mother had sent her a message through Mr. Peasner's Radio Eye. Bobbie Rawlins was of an old family in our county. Her mother died when she was a little girl, about ten, and she was brought up by a great-aunt. She had done just about what she pleased, and was pretty wild. She was twenty at the time Mr.

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Peasner turned his Radio Eye on her, and was a leader in the younger crowd.

Everyone knew about her, so it was very natural for people to be interested when the papers came out and said Mr. Peasner had received a message from Bobbie's dead mother and was trying to persuade Bobbie to come up to the college and receive it.

Every morning people looked anxiously in their papers to find out if Bobbie Rawlins had gone up and received the message from her dead mother. There was something about it in the big newspapers every day. Bobbie Rawlins and Mr. Peasner's pituitary gland and Radio Eye were on the front page for weeks. The news about them took people's minds off their own troubles. Even those who had been laid off in factories and those in the slums of our city were interested because they wanted Bobbie Rawlins to go up and get that message from her mother, so they could have their curiosity satisfied.

And one day she did. No one knows why she was persuaded to do so. People say many things. Some say there was something in Bobbie's life she didn't want published in the newspapers, others say her old great-aunt persuaded her to go because she wished to hear what her niece Bobbie's mother had to say from the dead.

One morning the paper had headlines saying that Bobbie had gone up to the College of King Arthur and received the message through Mr. Peasner's Radio Eye from the Realms of Higher Frequency.

And the message Bobbie received from her mother was that she must join the college and take the classes, and her best young man must become a Gold Shirt of America. So Bobbie joined and all her crowd followed. It was front page news.

Some of her crowd got out later, and don't belong any more. But many other people do because of her example. Part of her group stayed in and they are Mr. Peasner's standbys. The college is growing, young and old learning how to be good

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Nordics, how to fight for God and Country, and against the Jews and Communists.

Many rich women go up to get messages from the Realms of Higher Frequency through Mr. Peasner's Radio Eye. And the young men are talking about wearing their Gold Shirts in public.

AN IMPOSITION ON THE JUDGE

THERE WAS A RICH WIDOW from the North, a Mrs. Killian, who had a summer home out in the mountains just beyond Paradise Valley. She had very little to do and became interested in the schoolhouse in the valley. Mrs. Bradley visited her several times and told her about the school and the people, and as a result, just before she went North one Fall, she presented the school with a set of new desks. The next year she gave new blackboards.

When Mr. Peasner began his College of King Arthur, he visited Mrs. Killian, and she became one of his disciples. She didn't swallow everything Mr. Peasner said, but she did believe in his power to consult with the dead, and felt that he had a new religion to give to the world, a new belief in God. He was a great comfort to her, and through his Radio Eye she was able to talk with her little dog which had died the year before and was buried in the garden of her estate.

She was a very emotional woman and could be swayed in different directions, if her sympathies were appealed to in the right way. Mrs. Bradley had been able to get help for the school by appealing to her sympathies for the children who lived on the farms in the valley.

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During the months between the time when the farmers of Paradise Valley were put out of their homes so the mill could be built, and the time, months later, when the mill was finished and they had work in the new factory, some of the farmers, having no close friends or relatives were unable to find a way of getting food for themselves and their children.

One of these families, the McIvers, went to live in an abandoned freight car near the railroad. They had furniture from the farmhouse. When a Negro family moved out of the freight car next door, they took possession of that, too, so they had more room for the furniture. In one of the cars was their stove and table and dishes and one bed, and in the other freight car were two more beds, a washstand and a dresser.

There were four children in the family. Flora, who was fourteen, was the oldest. The children picked coal from the railroad tracks, and the family got a little in relief from the city. They did not get this very often because, since the bank had failed and all the county officers were indicted, there was no money either in the county or city treasury. Only people like Mrs. Killian giving money helped to keep the relief fund going at all. And there were so many who needed it, there was not nearly enough for all, because the rich were holding on to their money.

Flora McIver's father was out every day, looking for work, so the girl and her mother went into town for the relief that was given them. Sometimes it was only a bag of flour, and sometimes it was a little more, some fat back bacon and corn meal.

It has been told before how the county officers who were part of the Jackson crowd, built many roads in the county. Flora and her mother had to cross several of these on their shortcut from the city out to the place where they lived by the side of the railroad.

Often, because they had to wait in line, it was after dark when they started toward home.

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One evening, when they were especially late, and were hurrying to get home to feed the others, Flora was knocked down by a car on one of the roads.

The bag of flour she was carrying prevented her from seeing the car, and the man who was driving did not see her step out from the bushes at the side of the road until too late. She was knocked about twelve feet.

Mr. Haywood, the man who was driving the car, took his flashlight and found the girl unconscious on the side of the road. She was holding in her arms the torn and empty bag of flour.

As carefully as he could Mr. Haywood carried the girl to his car and laid her in the back seat with her head on her mother's lap. He drove them to a hospital, where they found that Flora's leg was broken in two places.

As there are no public hospitals in our county, the girl was taken to a private institution. Mr. Haywood had his car insured, so the insurance company guaranteed to pay all expenses while Flora was sick.

Insurance companies pay the doctor's bill and the hospital bill only when the patient has been dismissed from the hospital.

Some time later Flora was returned to her parents in an ambulance. They were surprised, for they had expected to see her come out of the hospital well and strong again. Since she was the eldest of the children they had hoped she might work in the mill along with her father and bring in some additional money for the family. But when she was in bed again at home they saw that her broken leg had not healed. The bone was sticking out. The point of it could be seen under her skin. She could not walk.

Mrs. Bradley, the school teacher, was at the freight-car house of the McIvers when Flora was brought home. Mrs. Bradley has a fine, generous nature, and is not afraid of saying what she thinks. When she saw Flora, when she realized the broken bone had not healed, but had knitted together so

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that part of it was still broken and showed through the flesh, she went back to town and hired a lawyer to carry the matter into court. Then she went about talking, urging people to give money to carry through the case.

They brought Flora into court. The doctor testified that Flora's bones would not heal because she was undernourished. The head of the hospital testified that they had sent Flora home in that condition because the doctor had said she was as well as she could be. In cross-examination both the doctor and the hospital head said the insurance company would not pay them until the patient was dismissed. In order to get their money they had to dismiss Flora. The doctor said, "a doctor must live" and the hospital superintendent told the court that hospitals must collect on their patients, or they cannot take in any more, because they would be obliged to close on account of having no money.

The judge decided that the doctor and the hospital must live so they were right in dismissing Flora. And it was not their fault the girl was not well, since Flora's bones would not heal because she was undernourished.

Flora was sent back to the two freight cars she and her parents called home. She lay there on the bed. Mrs. McIver had to take one of the younger children to the city when she heard that relief was to be given out.

Mrs. Bradley refused to be satisfied with the verdict. She persuaded some of the women who had fought against Elmer Jackson and his crowd to help her raise money for a second trial. She went to Mrs. Killian, the rich widow from the North, but Mrs. Killian, since she had begun attending Mr. Peasner's seances, was somewhat cool with Mrs. Bradley, and refused to give anything.

It is not necessary to go into the legal steps taken, but Mrs. Bradley got another trial for Flora McIver, to force the insurance company to pay for another stay in the hospital until Flora could be made entirely well.

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At the second trial Flora was present again. She lay in the courtroom, on one of those ambulance cots with her mother sitting on a chair beside her.

Many of the McIvers' old neighbors and friends came to the trial. It was about all they could do to show their sympathy for they had not yet begun to work in the mill.

It is hard for anyone to this day to tell what that second trial was about. Mrs. Bradley and all the old friends and neighbors of the McIvers went to court thinking the case was to be about Flora's broken leg, and whether she should be taken back into the hospital.

It would seem that with a fourteen-year-old girl with a broken leg right before them in court, they would talk about her. But what the lawyers for the insurance company and the judge were concerned with was whether there had been an imposition on the judge: in the previous trial.

"Was there an imposition on the judge?" the lawyers for the insurance company asked. And each time Flora's lawyer got up and began to say something about Flora's broken leg, one of the other lawyers jumped up and said, "I object. I object." And whenever they said this, as regularly as clock work, the judge who was sitting on the case said, "Objection sustained."

It seemed the previous judge had the injury, not Flora. The injury was an imposition. And the question was, did he have it or didn't he.

It took a long time, long hours, for them to thrash it out.

Finally when all the lawyers had talked all they wanted to about that imposition, the judge for Flora's case decided that there had been no imposition on the previous judge.

The trial was over. The judge went home to his dinner, and everybody else left court. And Flora was taken back to the freight cars to lie on the bed.

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IN A COFFEE POT

Tonight, like every night, you see me here
Drinking my coffee slowly, absorbed, alone.
A quiet creature at a table in the rear
Familiar at this evening hour and quite unknown.
The coffee steams. The Greek who runs the joint
Leans on the counter, sucks a dead cigar.
His eyes are meditative, sad, lost in what it is
Greeks think about the kind of Greeks they are.

I brood upon myself. I rot
Night after night in this cheap coffee pot.
I am twenty-two I shave each day
I was educated at a public school
They taught me what to read and what to say
The nobility of man my country's pride
How Nathan Hale died
And Grant took Richmond.
Was it on a summer or a winter's day?
Was it Sherman burned the Southland to the sea?
The men the names the dates have worn away
The classes words the books commencement prize
Here bitter with myself I sit
Holding the ashes of their prompted lies.

The bright boys, where are they now?
Fernando, handsome wop who led us all
The orator in the assembly hall
Arista man the school's big brain.
He's bus boy in an eat-quick joint
At seven per week twelve hours a day.

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His eyes are filled with my own pain
His life like mine is thrown away.
Big Jorgensen the honest, blonde, six feet,
And Daniels, cunning, sly,—all, all—
You'll find them reading Sunday's want ad sheet.
Our old man didnt know someone
Our mother gave no social teas
You'll find us any morning now
Sitting in the agencies.

You'll find us there before the office opens
Crowding the vestibule before the day begins
The secretary yawns from last night's date
The elevator boy's black face looks out and grins.
We push we crack our bitter jokes we wait
These mornings always find us waiting there
Each one of us has shined his broken shoes
Has brushed his coat and combed his careful hair
Dance hall boys pool parlor kids wise guys
The earnest son the college grad all, all
Each hides the question twitching in his eyes
And smokes and spits and leans against the wall.

We meet each other sometimes on the street
Sixth Avenue's high L bursts overhead
Freak shows whore gypsies hotdog stands
Cajole our penniless eyes our bankrupt hands.
"Working yet?" "The job aint come
Got promised but a runaround."
The L shakes building store and ground
"What's become of Harry? and what's become
Of Charley? Martinelli? Brooklyn Jones?"
"He's married—got a kid—and broke."
And Charley's on Blackwell's, Martinelli's through—
Met him in Grand Central—he's on the bum—
We're all of us on the bum—"
A freak show midget's pounding on a drum
The high L thunders redflag auctioneers

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Are selling out a bankrupt world—
The hammer falls—a bid! a bid!—and no one hears . . .

The afternoon will see us in the park
With pigeons and our feet in peanut shells.
We pick a bench apart. We brood
And count the twelve and thirteen tower bells.
What shall we do? Turn on the gas?
Jump a bridge? Boxcar west?
It's all the same there's nothing anywhere
A million guys are sitting on their ass
We always land
Back where we started from—a parkbench,
Cold, and spitting in the sand.

Who's handing us a runaround?
We hold our hands for sale arms brain
Eyes taught to figure accurate ears
We're salesmen clerks and civil engineers
We hang diplomas over kitchen sinks
Our toilet walls are stuck with our degrees
The old man's home no work and we—
Shall we squat out our days in agencies?
Or peddling socks shoelaces ties?
We wrench green grassblades up with sudden hands
The falling sun is doubled in our asking eyes . . .

And evening comes upon us there
Fingering in the torn pocket of our coat
The one cold nickel of our subway fare . . .

Night after night in this cheap coffee pot
I brood upon our lives. I rot. They rot.
The Greek's awakened from his dream. The dead cigar
Drops ash. He wipes the coffee bar.
He goes to fill the boiler once again.
The clock hand moves. A fly soars down
And stalks the sugar bowl's bright rim.

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IN A COFFEE POT

And I compare myself with him—this fly and I—
He crawls head downwards down a peeling wall
And I crawl after him.
You ask "Tomorrow?"... Go ask Fernando in the eatquick joint.
Ask Jorgensen pounding Sixth Avenue. Ask Martinelli too,
Watching the hole enlarging in his shoe.
And ask me here—alone with the crawling flies—
And I . . . I have seen the pain there in their eyes.
We shall not sit forever here and wait.
We shall not sit forever here and rot.
The agencies are filing cards of hate.

And I have seen how men lift up their hands
And turn them so and pause—
And so the slow brain moves and understands—
And so with million hands.

ALFRED HAYES

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STUDS LONIGAN*

James T. Farrell

YOU GUYS complaining that there's nothing to do ought to just stop and think about all the poor chumps who got to work on a day like this. Think of some goddamn Hunky swinging a pickaxe, chopping up the street with his fanny dragging to the ground, swinging away with that goddamn pickaxe, thirsty, his underwear dripping, wishing it was all over and he was sitting in the shade of the old apple tree," Benny Taite said, tilting himself backwards on a chair in the corner of the poolroom, and looking at the boys seated about in a circle.

"Benny, can that crap. You make us hot and tired, just hearing about it," said Red Kelly.

"I got a job swinging a pick for the city, and I worked one day. Was my can draggin'?" exclaimed Tommy.

"That was your record for work, wasn't it?" said Kenny Kilarney.

"It wouldn't hurt Taite there to try that for a couple of days. It might make a man of him," kidded Studs.

"Sure, Taite, tell us where you got all that pep of yours?" said Red.

"I inherited it from my grandfather. He didn't work for forty years, and I'm out to break his record," Benny dryly said.

"Say, for Christ sake, let's do something," Studs said, suddenly restive with inaction, while the boys were laughing.

"Exercise your tail on that chair you got. That's what days like this were made for," said Taite.

* Excerpts from the forthcoming novel, *The Young Manhood of Studs Lonigan,* published by the Vanguard Press.

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"What time is it?" said Studs.

"Two o'clock," said Red.

"Lonigan's waitin' for supper again," said Kenny; they laughed.

"Let's go over to the park," said Studs.

"Walk a block and a half in this sun? Not this sundodger," Kilarney said.

"Oh, by the way, fellows, I forgot to tell you that I saw Paulie Haggerty," Red said.

"Is he still chasin' that jane of his?" asked Studs.

"Married her. I think it was a shot-gun wedding," said Red.

Kilarney suddenly changed their astonishment to amusement by melodramatically lamenting that poor Paulie preferred double wretchedness to single blessedness.

"You know, fellows, getting your ashes hauled is one thing, and getting married is another. You can joke all you want about marriage, but it's sacred, a sacrament of the Church and when you're married it's serious, for life. Paulie's too young for that, he's only seventeen. He might be ruining his whole life. . . . Well, he can't say that I didn't warn him because I did, plenty," Red Kelly said.

"Hey, Kelly, why don't you hire a hall?" Kilarney said.

"Kilarney, you couldn't be serious about anything, could you?" Kelly said, good naturedly.

"He must be cured," Studs said, butting in on Kilarney's rejoinder.

"He said it cured itself, but he can't kid me, and nobody can tell me that a dose cures itself without even a doctor. And if you ask me, he's playing a damn rotten trick on Eileen. She was a sweet girl, coming from a decent family and a good home. She falls for him, and what does he do but knock her up, and I suppose dose her. Paulie is a pal of mine, and I'd stick through hell with him, but he certainly did act like a rat with Eileen."

"Hell, Red, that jane is five years older than he is, and don't tell me she didn't know what he was doing. She chased

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him all over the neighborhood, and now she's got a ball and chain on him. Christ, he'll even have to go to work," Taite said, burlesqueing his last sentence.

"That's not so. It was a lousy trick, and she comes from a decent family and doesn't deserve it," Red said.

"Red, she's a terrible spider, and she spun a web around Paulie, my pal Paulie," Kilarney said, extravagantly.

Weary Reilley entered, with his right hand bandaged. They asked him if he'd been knocking brick buildings over.

"I just tangled holes with some flukey-looking wiseacre down at Sixty-third and the Grove. He thought he was tough, so I sent him home with a handful of teeth and a puss full of blood. But I damn near broke my hand to hell on him and had to have three stitches put in it. Anyway, I learned something. Instead of breaking my dukes any more on some rat's face, I'm getting me a nice pair of brass knucks."

Studs thought of how he hadn't had a fight since hell-and-gone. But once he'd cleaned up Reilley. Nobody else in the neighborhood had. He supposed, too, that he'd have to tangle again with him. Reilley always tried to get even. Well, Reilley wouldn't be as hard this time, with his dukes on the fritz. They kept asking Reilley questions and praising him. Hell, had they forgot what a battler Studs Lonigan was?

"Say, who in hell is going to give me a fag?"

"Kilarney, don't you ever smoke your own?" Red responded.

"O.P.'s satisfy me."

"Some day other people will get wise to you," kidded Red.

"Fellow, you know what Barnum said?"

Studs handed Kenny a cigarette.

"Thanks, chump," kidded Kilarney.

"Hey, Kilarney, think you'll ever amount to much?" asked Taite.

"Sure! Why I even went downtown yesterday to look for a job."

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"How was the show?" asked Doyle.

"Good bill at the State and Lake."

"I guess then we'll all have to go looking for a job tomorrow," Red said.

"What about you, Reilley, have you been thinkin' of getting a job and desertin' our cause of late?" asked Taite.

"There's plenty of chumps workin' already," Reilley said.

"That's what I'm trying to suggest to my old man. But he gets on a soap-box every morning at breakfast and threatens not to give me any more dough," Studs said.

"My old man tried that once, and I blew. He knows better than try it again. He's got enough dough and did enough work for the Reilleys for a long time to come. If he cracks wise about it, he knows I'll just tell him all right fellow, and blow. I can get me a gat and pull a stickup when I need the kale," Reilley said, causing them all to admire him.

"You know, boys, sometimes I think it would be a good idea to go on the bum," Doyle said.

"Not me. I know where I can find my pork chops," Studs said.

"If you did go, you might meet Davey Cohen. Hell, he's been gone three years, ever since that time we gang-shagged that little bitch Iris, and she told him no soap because he was a hebe," said Red.

"If somebody hasn't croaked that kike by this time, they ought to. I don't like kikes," Weary said.

II.

After supper, Lonigan called Studs into the parlor for a talk. He said all right, a bit surlily, and stopped off in the bathroom to get his thoughts collected. He felt that maybe this was going to be a showdown with the old man, and if it was, he'd let him know that Studs Lonigan was going to be his own boss.

The old man sat in his rocker, an ancient piece with a plush cushion that the old lady had been trying to get out of the

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parlor for years. Studs entered with a scowl of determination on his face. The old man gave him a sharp look, as if to scare him. He told Studs to sit down, his manner authoritative, and he dabbled away at lighting his stogy.

"You're going on eighteen?"

"Yes."

"I wonder if you agree with me that it's about time that you begin to figure out what you're going to do with your life?"

"Well . . . I looked for a job today."

"Where?"

"Oh, a number of places in the Loop," Studs said, wishing he had told the old man to mind his own damn business.

"Do you want to go back to school or don't you?" the old man asked, nodding ironically.

"I don't like school," Studs said with uncertain firmness.

"Well, what do you want or like?"

"I'll get a job one of these days."

"Yes. You've been doing that for over a year, and it's cost me a buck a day. What's the matter with you? Are you sick? Tonight at the supper table there, you didn't even bat an eye and had a face a yard long. What's wrong? Are you sick, or in trouble?"

"Nothing. I'll get a job."

"Take the chip off your shoulder!"

"I ain't got any on it!"

"I can't understand you. Here I'm willing to give you a hell of a lot better chance in life than I ever had, and you won't take it. You just mope along . . . " the old man stopped short and shrugged his shoulders, a gesture of weariness. Studs waited to see what would come next.

"Well, as they say, you can bring a horse to the trough, but you can't make him drink!"

The old man whewed as if expressing the difficulties of thinking down into disconsolate depths.

"Maybe you're better off without an education, and a lot

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of book-learning. It might make you into a high-hat snob like it did Dinny Gorman. You don't need an education like that to be a success. I didn't."

Studs wanted it to be over so he could get out of the damn house.

"What you need is hard work, and I'm going to give it to you. Tomorrow you can come with me, and I'll put you to work."

Remembering what Weary had said of his old man, Studs felt that he'd be yellow if he took this. And he felt his courage ebbing.

"I had to work a damn sight harder than you'll ever have to. . . . And I'll be damned if I let you become a poolroom bum!" Lonigan said with sudden energy, banging his right fist into his left palm.

"I'm not a poolroom bum," Studs unconvincingly replied.

"I don't want you to become one!"

"I'm not!" Studs countered like a pouting child.

"I'm your father, and it's my duty to see that you amount to something and turn into a decent citizen. And, by God, I will. You children are all your mother and I got. We worked hard for you, and we don't want to feel that we done it all for nothing. You owe us something in return, and all we are asking of you is that you amount to something, be decent citizens, give us the right to be justifiably proud of you. We don't want to have to hang our heads in shame because of any of our children when we walk down the street. And, by God, I'll see that we don't have to!"

Studs was sore, but words just choked up in him.

"You understand now. You come with me in the morning!"

A dangerous pause.

"I can find a job maybe tomorrow," Studs said, immediately perceiving that his words had weakly fizzled.

"I told you what you'd do!" the old man half-shouted.

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"I'll find my own job!" Studs said swiftly and breathlessly, as he jumped to his feet.

"For once you do what I say! In the morning, you start turning over a new leaf. . . . And, yes, you might as well stay in tonight so's to get a good night's sleep. You'll need it in the morning."

"I'm my own boss!"

"Why, you goddamn little . . . "

A red flush from the slap he got appeared on Studs' left cheek. Uncontrolled tears welled forth. He wanted to hit back. He was afraid of his father. He sniffled without will.

The old man dropped back to his rocker, held his head in his hands. Studs looked at him, imagined himself smashing the old bastard's face till it bled and swelled. He stood impotently.

"You heard me! Tomorrow! Now get the hell out of my sight before I give you the trimming you deserve, you dirty little whelp!"

"Patrick! What's happened?" the old lady said, coming to the entry way, as Studs, still bawling, turned to go.

"William! . . . *William!*"

"I'm leaving here!" Studs said, brushing past her.

"Did you hit him?" the mother demanded.

"And I'll hit again. After all I done for him, the dirty little ingrate, defying me! All right, go on, get out, and don't come back. I don't ever want to see you again!"

"Patrick Lonigan! How dare you! Striking my son, my own flesh and blood! Ordering my precious first-born baby out of my home!"

"Mary, you don't know what you're talking about. Don't tell me what I'm to do in my home! And don't be wastin' your sympathy. What he needs is to get the tar kicked out of him. And if he wants to live here, he'll do what I tell him!"

In his room, Studs was proud of himself for having defied the old man. Glad, too, that his father and mother were having

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a big blowout. He cried; well, he was so goddamn sore, he couldn't help it.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" Fran said, stopping in his doorway.

"Mind your own goddamn business!"

"How dare you curse me!" she said, shocked.

"For Christ sake, shut your trap!"

She rushed into the parlor, and shrieked in a high-pitched voice. It was like a nut-house now. He slipped into his old lady's room, and copped five bucks from her pocket-book. He got his rusty old gat from its hiding place at the bottom of his closet. He put on his cap, and went to the bathroom. He saw that his eyes were red from crying. He tried to hide the redness with Fran's powder. He was ashamed of himself.

"My son . . . my son!" his mother muttered, trying to block his path at the front door.

"I'm going!"

"William, your father just lost his temper. Go in and tell him you're sorry and. . . . "

"I can take care of myself!" he said, viciously slamming the door.

"You don't know what you're doing to dad. Come back," Fran begged, pursuing him in the hallway.

"Take your lousy hands off me!"

His parents called him from the window. He didn't look at them. At the corner, he turned, and saw his old man coming out of the building. He ran, ditching the old man by running through alleys and gangways.

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THE SHEEP DIP

Ben Field

ALL SUMMER LONG we pushed hard to finish haying. The sheep must be dipped quickly. The drouth had burned the land and spread flies and gnats like puffs of smoke everywhere. The wool hung in tatters on the plagued sheep. They were covered with scabs and rotting sores. Maggots got into their heads. They staggered in circles until they dropped dead.

Middle of August we cleared the last field. We began the roundup. The sheep must be driven ten miles. The boss was too poor to have his own tank. Several thousand sheep would be dipped from surrounding farms. The county agent, former teacher in a farm school that had cut its staff, would be down in the village to help with the dipping.

The roundup took longer than we had bargained for. The flock was large. It hadn't paid to sell a single lamb or ewe all year. There was no money to fix fences. The sheep were scattered all over the country. The brush and second growth were thick where they hid from the flies.

By horse and foot we drove them out of the pasture land and woods. They bolted back. They slipped into swamps and briar patches. We had to track them by their droppings. Night after night, we got back to milking long after dark. We milked in the barnyard under a low hot sky like a smoldering beam. Our sweat dripped into the pails. The boss's three boys, who had rather been cray-fishing or squeezing cicadas by the belly to hear them yell, dropped off to sleep over their suppers.

The morning set to drive the flock to the village we got up with the cocks. After chores we waited. The boss had heard

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a rain crow last night. It cleared up with a fresh wind blowing. We waited in the lane for our neighbors. They came up with their flocks. Together we had 900 sheep to manage.

The boys galloped around on the clumsy workhorses, ahead and behind. The men trudged alongside the flock. A long road ahead. There were many young lambs. The wind died down. The sky thickened like marrow.

The boys first took it as a lark. They raced their horses and cried, "Ya, Ya, Ya." They chased a redtailed hawk, waving their hats.

Soon lambs drifted away from their mothers. They lagged, bewildered. An old ewe toppled into a rut. She wouldn't budge. We pulled her up under an oak. Two rams got thru a fence. We cornered them and swung them over the wire. Off the main highway onto an old logging railroad. The bundled sheep poured thru an open barway. The farmer rushed out of his stable with a pitchfork. A dog barked. We cleared them out before any damage was done. The country became hillier. The road nothing but a wagon track. Halfway, the boys stopped to lap water from a brook. The puffing horses looked soaped. To keep the boss still was as hard as keeping a cocksparrow on the ground. The bleating sheep streamed into a hollow. At noon we reached the village.

We ate at the farmer's who owned the dipping tank. The boss bolted his beef and cabbage, slammed a fistful of long cut into his mouth, and was the first in the sheds. We partitioned the sheds off with hayracks. In one corner we drenched. In the cowyard the dipping tank and the drying platform were all ready.

The county agent, a hairy little fellow like a woodmoth, in boots several sizes too large, lectured to the farmers. "We're ready to fix them for bugs internal, external, infernal. See that lamb pissing there. Built like a brick, built low to the ground. That's the best kind for the market."

The boss listened impatiently. He muttered, studying his

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bellwether: "Mine's always been a pain in the neck. His behind built three miles in the air. Got to have money for proper seed. Got to be rich for good farming."

An old hand prepared the drench. It was a mixture of Black Leaf Forty and blue vitriol. Different doses were shoved down the lambs, ewes, and rams. We yelled the dose we wanted, spotted our sheep. We saddled ourselves on them, yanked open the tight little mouths, and forced in the baby syringe or the bottle. It was a tough tussle. The lambs slipped between our legs. The ewes bucked and mounted each other. It took two men to handle many of them. Our old neighbor got cracked in the head by a plunging ram. He staggered into the yard and fell into the grass. Some of the ewes passed out. "Give them a little cold water," bawled the county agent. "Don't hold the head up so high. The stuff'll get down their lungs. It's the stomach we're shooting for. You Jacks and hoppers should read the 'Shepherd Boy'."

The shed was hot. The boss worked with his shirt off. He handled the biggest ewes and rams. None got away from him. No drench remained in his bottles or spilled. He drenched faster than anybody else. The sweat poured over his wry face. As a young man he had done lots of butchering for the village. Once a dying steer had split his face open with a kick.

After drenching the first flock, we drove the sheep into the yard. The agent stirred the dip. This would last two years. The creosote had never killed the nits. The arsenate of lead in the new Cooper's Dip would do a thorough job.

The sheep were chased down the chute. They balked at the edge of the tank. We grabbed them by their hind legs. They fell head first. Four farmers stood in the pits alongside the tank. They got the sheep, one hand on head and one on back. They shoved them down. The scared things scrambled up a cleated plank onto the drying platform. The ewes were kept from the lambs to prevent sucking until the poison had dried off.

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The sheep bleated. They backed away. They sprawled and lunged. They threshed about in the tank. They splashed the yolky strong dip into the eyes of the tank men. Fresh dippers took their place. Soon they too were soaked to the skin. And then it began raining.

"The drouth's broken," whooped a young farmer.

"Yah," jerked out the boss, eyeing the sky distrustfully.

It was twilight, and we were about to knock off anyway. We waited for the boss's wife to come in the truck for us. The agent drove us back. We left the horses in the village.

Late next morning we managed to get the truck started. The boss needed a new truck. But he hadn't the cash to spare for a nickel harmonica. We chugged into the village long after the others had started drenching. We worked the rest of the day without a let-up. At night we couldn't start the truck. We rode back on the horses. Two on a horse. The youngest boy became violently sick during milking. He had swallowed some of the dip. He had to stay in bed.

Our flock was at the tailend of the dipping. The farmers were dog-tired. They crawled around, red-eyed, snuffling. The weather had a bulling streak on. Every afternoon at about the same time a storm broke out and raged all night. The county agent kept chirping to cheer us:

"Make the yo jump.
the one with the mark on her rump,
And when she's soaked well,
Let her go plumb to hell."

Even the Lutheran minister paid us a visit. He went around nodding approvingly. He patted the heads of the lambs. He pointed to a ewe with a rupture: "must be a good milker."

Between dipping and drenching some of the old hawbucks rested to talk. Alfalfa wasn't extra good this season. You couldn't sell enough wool to plug a pair of ears. The papers say they're going to put up a $50,000 monument for the old lumberjacks who first cleared the country. Yah, but it would

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be better if the money was given the sons of the old lumberjacks whose farms are plastered with mortgages. Lambs are selling for only twenty-five cents a piece further west. The Ioway farmers are up to something again now. Strikes and picketing. Even the county agent wished them luck.

The boss didn't join in with the old gabmouths. He would have dipped thru thunder and lightning. He was impatient to cut his oats and begin his fall plowing.

Only about once a week did the boss have time to glance at the papers. That was Sunday when he got his copies from the minister. He never discussed politics though his neighbors who looked up to him wanted him to run for justice of peace. Politics had nothing to do with his having lost his shirt in dairy when butterfat fell to ten cents a pound. It had nothing to do with his having been forced to sell half his Jersey herd and go into beef cattle and sheep. He felt that if he were given the right chance he could settle things for himself single-handed, settle it the way one strong man, facing another across the table, can settle a score. All he wanted was that the world let him alone. He had the Dutch stolidity. His huge moustache like the stuffing out of an old horsecollar completely covered his lips so that you weren't surprised he rarely opened them.

Last spring the boss had violently quarreled for the first time in his life. The young blacksmith had come back to the village after having lost his job in a Detroit factory. He met the boss in church. His head was buzzing with new ideas. He said working in a factory knocks you against a thousand other fellows. It sharpens the brain up like a plowpoint. That is why workers must show farmers what to do. The reason the boss didn't see things right yet was that he was poisoned by this here capitalism. Every time he gave himself a lick he took the eggs in like those of a botfly so that his guts and brains were full of maggots. He said all this to the boss to whom cities were still the devil's, and a factory the devil's chief drop hole. Who was laboring till the blood clouded his eyes to pay off his

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mortage so that his boys would be forever safe on the farm. The boss had flung up his fist before the blacksmith. He had fired out in the middle of church, "You're one dumb fool." And now while the farmers were gabbing about picketing and strike, all he muttered was, "You can't work it that way. A farm ain't a factory. No, never."

We finally finished dipping one muggy forenoon. Instead of waiting for dinner, the boss decided to drive the sheep back immediately. The farmers agreed it would take us longer as we were shorthanded. The youngest boy still tossed about in bed. The old man, who had been cracked in the head, had also stayed home. The sheep were weak and hungry. They had been kept in a small dry meadow waiting their turn.

The farmer's wife gave us lunch wrapped in newspapers. The old farmer yelled, "Good luck, Dutch." We set out by foot. The horses had been left in the stable. The boss said they wouldn't be much good if it stormed and the sheep got thru fences.

The sheep trotted down the road loose. They pattered from one side of the road to the other hunting grass. They lost their mothers. Lambs knelt to suck. They were left sucking air on their knees as the ewes pulled away. The black-faced ram spied a gateway. He bounded thru. The flocks after him. Hens cackled in the dooryard. Feathers flew. Purple martins, scared from their nest high on a pole, fluttered wildly about. The boys were too fagged to even whoop at them. The sheep were in the garden. They trampled beets and carrots. They punched holes thru flowers. They left wool on the barbwire.

Then the wind came to life. It scooped sand into mouth and eyes. The wheel of a windmill hummed like a sharp spur against the sky. While walking we tore at our sandwiches. The boss stuffed his into his pocket. A burrheaded lamb dropped. He picked it up without shortening his stride. The ruptured sheep waddled into a ditch, sinking on her belly with a groan. He reached over to thump her.

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At a fork in the road a car. It was the postmaster. The farmers with sticks crowded round him. He had letters and papers. Wool's dropped a cent again. But there's hot news from Ioway. The fellows out there are batting hell out of sheriffs and scabs. The boss was cleaning the nose of a sheep that had begun staggering in a circle. He snorted impatiently, "Rain's on."

The troublesome old ram had disappeared. We found him in a meadow, head buried in sweet fern. The boss started cursing. He switched him until the wool flew off his rump. He kicked the lagging sheep in their scuts. He kicked hard with his hobnailed boots. We hadn't seen him let go of himself that way yet.

The rain first fell in slugs. Over the woods, sawing in the wind, lightning flashed. Last year there had been a tornado.

The sheep tried to crawl under brush and trees. We drove them savagely out into the road. They turned round to face us. The farmers let out all their misery on them. We pounded them with sticks. We chucked clods and gobs of mud. We stoned them till the stones took great bites out of their sides.

Lightning ran down the sky like the flare of a burning fuse. The clouds lifted in rocks and shattered on the hills. The rain hurled itself on the sheep. The sheep lay flattened in the road in a torn woolen mass.

Surrounding the flock, we waited. The storm grew worse. The boss tightened his belt. He waded thru the wind. The sheep stirred. They stumbled thru water up to their bellies.

It was late afternoon when we reached the barn of our nearest neighbor. Here the flocks went different ways. This farmer had given up his phone because of the hard times. Several bolts had struck to the east. The anxious boys couldn't call up their mother. We left a dozen of our smallest lambs and a stunned ewe.

We reached the wood. The boss broke the wire with his hands. The dazed sheep crawled in. As he twisted the strands

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together, a bush shook up the road. One of the big ewes must have strayed off. She staggered forward, flop-eared, bleating for her young.

For a moment the boss seemed to sag. He looked ready to burst into tears. He leaped like a wrestler doing the "flying mare." His wet pants stuck to his buttocks. He knocked her down with both fists. He grabbed her by the legs. He whirled her around and around. He kept whirling as if he were in a twister. With a grunt he hurled her across the fence.

She landed with a thud. She made a few knifelike thrusts with her legs. She lay still. The rain ate the blood off her nose.

The boys stood rooted in the mud. Their faces were bunched with terror. They jerked up their bruised young hands. They started crying.

Their father knelt in the mud sucking air like a lamb from whom the ewe had pulled away. The wind tore the words from his mouth. Bubbles like animal eyes burst in the boiling puddles.

He got up lifting his knees high. He leaned against a tree. The package of lunch lay on the grass. The oldest boy clawed for it. He gulped, "Eat, Paw, eat." The other boy, sobbing, held on to his father's torn shirt.

The boss shook his dripping head. A puzzled look churned his face. He stared off thru the break in the trees. There in the distance his field of crushed oats. There the silo poking out like a rusty muzzle. Only good for a hogpen since the tumble in milk.

The boy still held the soggy bread. The boss pawed the bread. His big ears moved. He crushed the bread between his jaws. He looked anxiously at the young twisted faces. He gulped at last, "Sweat—sweat your head off till it's turned blister. Little comes of it. It's all factory. All, Christ Almighty!"

He wiped his big shaken hands. The sheep bleated in the bushes. We followed him in the rain.

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POEM

Not Christmas nor the new year white with snow
and cold with dying names emasculate
marks for our lives the *new* year. Only spring
arrived at its fulfillment, at the peak
of verdurous blossoming
connotes the quick
deep breath of hope
again—the sharp release
of man grown tense with winter, now set free
to soar again (this day when our grasp,
grown powerful, foretells
its final fusion with our scope), to surge
in multitude toward greatness.

On this day
the small deeds of the year, infinitesimal,
unnoticed in the smoke of skirmish, cleave
fiercely together. The edifice grows huge,
becomes unvanquishable mass: the voice
and eyes and ears of us who have grown strong
on bitter bread, dry root.

And now we march!

The brain will not deny
the days that come with verdure nor the eye
ignore the splendor of the changing year
invested with surprise: bells clanging in the ear
with sound that drowns the singing of the birds
and voices rich with prophecy—the words
fraught with great deeds.

Down countless avenues

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the senses feel impending change: the clues
that guide our burdened hearts, heavy with pain,
awakening class-memories—

they burn again!

O comrades of my dawns and days and nights
O you who live with me
you at my side in battle
and at midnight talk
after the fruitful day
learning to meet the challenge of tomorrow's foe—
welcome this spring!
this burning first of May
this ever-recurring day pregnant with history
born in this land which witnessed our birth—
this land will be our own!

Remember now—
delve backward through the years' accumulated dust:
Haymarket—Spies, George Engel, Albert Parsons—
the noose drawn tightly—gasping "I have nothing,
nothing, not even now, that I regret . . . "
Fisher and *Lingg*, their shadows on a wall
magnified a millionfold, cast by a setting sun
westward to California, east to Hatteras
where embattled workers sought an added hour of day.

Mark their names well: their death

and now recall
the spring that came the next year and the years that followed
and the wars that bled us and the war that bore
shining through the mud and mangled limbs the dawn,
life for the men of Russia

and for us
victory in sight, a star grown clear in the skies!

Mark their names well: now feel the memory
that coursed in action through your father's veins,
given to you at birth, to a million others:

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the dereliction of our youth, the sordid
childhood ripening to bitterness,
the aimless wandering from place to place
seeking—what? You did not know, nor I.
But scattered images remained, grew sharp
and deep, indelible: Wisconsin farmhouse,
barn wall sagging inward into emptiness,
Chicago midnights on the lakeshore, beauty
trampled on by hunger, no rest, no rest—
icy roads across the Alleghenies,
the clear bright brittle air of winter
and at night we hugged the walls of public buildings
but could not sleep.

Back to New York again:
there was warmth there was food there was time to think,
to merge the broken images, to synthesize
Mendota's midnight beauty and New York by day—
Haymarket and Union Square in 1933 . . .

Nothing has been lost. The photographic plates
grow clear in the solution—the worlds at war—
unforgettable—

the image looms and casts
a huger image on the growing screen,
projection of our lives and struggles.

Comrades
here is my hand! Here's all of me, my friends,
brothers in arms and fellow builders! We
together through the long transition marching
will notch the trees along the way.

This May
has deeper meaning now than ever.

Close your ranks,
touch shoulders—ready?

There's our signal—

March!

EDWIN ROLFE

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DEATH OF A SHOP

Arthur Pense

MANY OF THE OPERATORS and pressers had worked for the Pretifit Company for twenty years. Young when they came: Jewish artisans and talmudists from Lithau, Ukrainian peasants from Volhynia, Italians from the suburbs of Naples and Sicilian tenant farmers. Some of the girls had run from czarist oppression, some came to the United States seeking their fortunes. They labored devotedly and they built the Pretifit Company, Incorporated, Clothing Contractors.

The company started on Mangin Street, under the constant thunder of the Williamsburgh Bridge. It was a dim loft on the sixth floor where cobwebs festooned the corners of the sheet metal ceilings. The rusty, dripping faucets whistled dismally. The toilet bowls were cracked. But rent was cheap. The "hands" climbed six flights of wooden stairs to the shop.

Every day a truckload of bundles came and the driver's sharp and repeated yell, "Pretifit!" rose from the curb. Bundles! The operators and pressers were thrilled. Their pulses quickened. Around Christmas, when the season usually slacked, another truckload brought cheerful glances and spirited exhortations *"Reib arein, reib arein, Bruderke."* The hum of a melancholy song was drowned in the roar of the sewing machines. This was in the days of foot-power and heavy press irons. Under the spell of arriving bundles the operators swung their legs faster and the pressers hit harder with their irons.

"Hey, Max, Nathan, Karpov, Tony, all of you, downstairs for the bundles." The boss woke them from their mellow revery. The young men rushed down the six flights and returned

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staggering under the massive bundles of cut material. They dropped the load in a pile, wiped the sweat trickling down their faces and returned to the machines.

Hours? The clock stopped sometime in the year 1913 and was never wound up again. Before dawn the workers trudged up the stairs half asleep. Late in the evening they were still working under the hissing fans of the gas lights. They spent sixty hours a week at the bench. They worked six days a week and slept on the seventh. On the seventh day, in the twilight of late afternoon, they emerged to see the world.

Wages? "What, you expect the boss to give you work and pay you wages as well?" Nathan used to say to his fellow workers. "Why, I can live on eight dollars a week, *kayed hamelech,* according to the bounty of the king. One roll is more than two cents? A piece of herring costs two cents. An apple, two cents. Six cents according to the bounty of the king."

The Pretifit Company grew from year to year. Grey strands appeared in the hair of the "old guard," Max, Nathan, Karpov, Tony Maspero. Their shoulders drooped. They began wearing eye glasses.

Sam and Jake Toporov owned the Pretifit. As they grew rich they moved their shop to Bleecker Street, took out large insurance policies, and sent their wives to the Catskill Mountains "to gain."

When the Men's Clothing Workers Union was organized, the workers of the Pretifit Company were in the front ranks. They were proud of this Union born of revolt.

II.

The war. The Pretifit Company received truckloads of cut uniforms: heavy, sand-colored goods sewed with extra heavy thread. The color had to be matched at needle and bobbin. The machine moved with difficulty. Needles and hooks broke.

Every day an officer came to the factory to inspect the work and speed production. The war went on and wages mounted. Max Silverberg quit. He said he was an anarchist

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and would not support a capitalist war. He said that if all the workers quit making ammunition and uniforms, the soldiers couldn't go on and the war would stop.

The old guard said his ideas were good but they were not practical. Now they oiled their machines more often. They shortened the lower straps and the machines grunted and rode on the goods without a hitch.

Soldiers were killed and the dollars of the Pretifit Company multiplied by the thousands. The Toporovs now owned a hotel in the Catskills, cottages with fluted columns in Mount Vernon, stocks in Wall Street, and bottles of whiskey in the pigeonholes of the office desk.

Nathan, Karpov, and Tony Maspero married and bought victrolas with painted panels of Cupid and Psyche and Athenian warriors. One of the pocketmakers who could "fling in" fifty pockets an hour, broke down at the bench. He was crazed by the terrific strain. Max Silverberg was taken into the shop again to replace the broken man.

Max was a fast pocketmaker too. But he was not as fast as the other. His hair was grey. His moustache, too, showed streaks of grey. Only his eyebrows were still black as charcoal and the glitter remained in his eyes. He was married and had a little girl whom he called "the comforter of my old years."

He theorized a lot, cutting the air with his thumb, like a Talmud student. The shop called him "Radek." He always spoke of the World Revolution. He said he was a member of the Communist Party. He said the Anarchists were doomed to disappear from the labor movement because of their contempt for organization. According to him the United States was ripe for socialism. Only, the workers' minds had to be prepared. He was very happy in the company of the old guard: Nathan Golub, Maxim Karpov, Tony Maspero and the two women growing old in the Pretifit Shop.

III.

About this time the Pretifit Company said the workers

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would have to take a wage cut. Unless the shop accepted they threatened to move to Jersey and the men would lose their jobs.

"We can get plenty of hands in Passaic," the Toporovs said. "The farmers and their children are willing to work for anything. The returned soldiers are begging for jobs. My brother-in-law has the mayor of a village working for him as a seam presser," the younger Toporov added.

Max Silverberg was in favor of a strike. He urged the workers to picket the shop and prevent it from going out of town. But the others said his Bolshevik ideas would ruin the firm. They said if he carried on his propaganda in the shop they would refuse to work with him. Some of the younger men were against this threatened boycott of a fellow worker but they were too timid to follow his lead.

The walking delegates came from the union in their tailored suits. After they collected the dues and told the bosses about the bargain silk shirts at Wanamaker's, they warned the workers not to raise any issues and went away.

Max went to the president of the union. The president smiled and explained, "These are changing times. We must bow to circumstances." He finished with the same liquid smile.

"No, we must not bow!" Max insisted. "We must fight."

"Well, go and fight," he waved an indifferent hand. "Don't bow," he said contemptuously.

The workers accepted the wage cut. Max swallowed his resentment. Work was scarce. He returned to the shop.

IV.

The Spring season lasted only twelve weeks and the Fall season barely stretched to sixteen. The old guard plodded listlessly through the streets while the bosses speculated in Wall Street and spent their evenings in speakeasies.

Often, when the season was in full swing, the bosses lurched, into the shop, their eyes glazed and bleary. They cursed the operators who often had to manage the shop themselves.

Rapidly, the old guard grew grey. Max's hair was all

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white now. He prided himself on being one of the older members of the Communist Party. As the years passed his belief in the revolution remained unshaken. But deep inside he resented that it came so slowly. The workers became numb and resigned to the speed-up system.

Max wrote to the Communist newspaper:

Dear Comrade Editor:

It is just twelve o'clock now. I am too tired to stand up. My hands tremble from overstrain. My fellow workers stagger to the sink to wash their hands. They are so pale. Their cheeks cave in. Now they are sitting in front of the machines eating their lunches. They are too tired to eat.

Dear Comrade editor, can such human beings be respected? Can their wives and children love them? The president of our union is still "optimistic" and he does nothing to improve our lot.

We are organizing a rank and file committee in our local. We'll try to voice our grievances in a militant way. We will rouse the workers to action.

Please print my letter and if necessary please correct my spelling.

Comradely yours,
Max Silverberg
Organizer, Rank and File Committee

A short time before the Wall Street crash the Pretifit Company decided to take the workers into "partnership." The operators and pressers were told to "chip in" their war time savings. The Pretifit Company said the plan was to make bosses of all of them. They would share the profits of the corporation besides their regular wages.

At first the workers were doubtful about the plan. They expected a short season. When the bosses threatened to move their shop to Passaic they brought their meagre savings. Some pawned their gold watches and the diamond rings they bought

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their wives during the war. Only Max declined to take a "share" in the business. He said he could not be a boss and a communist at the same time. He was ready to quit; but he was a good pocketmaker and they let him stay in the shop.

The worker-bosses watched one another suspiciously. They remained in the shop every evening, fingering the coats, puttering about the fitting table, admonishing the finishers, acting like real bosses, relieving the Toporovs of the slave-driver's task. They worked extra hours and counted the number of coats produced each day. In the street they talked coats. They came home late in the evening and talked coats to their wives. They talked of the "corporation" even in their sleep. Many of them discovered they were "bookkeepers." They wrote figures on greasy scraps of paper which they carried about in their vest pockets.

But the profits did not come. The workers were told to increase production. They were bewildered. The young men complained that they had never been driven like this before.

They quarrelled among themselves. The shape-sewer accused the pocketmakers of slowing up the work. The pocketmakers said the stitcher was sabotaging on the pocket flaps. The seam-presser complained that the seams were so narrow they couldn't be ironed at all.

The bosses insisted they were losing money. They said they were unwilling to tax the workers' investments and instead demanded that a per capita charge be levied on the pay envelopes every week until the losses were covered.

Max Silverberg protested that the Pretifit had become a racket. The workers threatened to strike to get their money back. As an answer to the strike threat, the Toporovs brought in two machinists who began dismantling the plant. Truckmen carried the machines down to a truck. The workers stood with bowed heads.

Max and some of the others who were the heart of the rank and file committee in the shop decided to hold an open-

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air meeting. They were certain the other workers would join them and form a picket line in front of the shop.

The bosses sensed trouble and ordered the machines brought back from the truck. They called the workers into the office individually. Most of the men agreed to piece work. The others consented to a cut in pay. It was understood that everyone would refuse to work with the members of the rank and file committee. "If they quit," the bosses said, "there will be more work for the rest of you."

When the picket committee came back to the shop, the workers were celebrating the settlement with bootleg whiskey, dripping schmaltz herring, a formidable loaf of glossy pumpernickel, wurst, pickles, and sponge cake.

Tony Maspero whispered to Nathan, "Whiskey they give, pickles they give,—but wages? No. The bastards."

The girls also had the whiskey and cake. The operators drank toasts to them, "get married next year so you won't need the miserable shop." A hilarious worker slapped the girls on their behinds. The shape-sewer, aristocrat of the trade, pinched a girl on the breast. She screamed and struck him gently.

"Put them out," some voices barked at the picket committee. But others implored, "Why give us more trouble than we already have? We took the wage cut because we were forced to take it. Come back to work and let's forget, or do you insist on starting the revolution in just this shop? Well, what do you say, Brother Silverberg?"

"I take no reduction," Max answered. "Don't anyone dare to touch my pay envelope."

"Alleh right, alleh right," Tony said. "You no take no redugashun, de sam as meself. Zhust reib arein an fineesh! What you can do?"

That afternoon the machines grunted like hungry pigs. The hum of a melancholy song drowned in the dismal chorus.

Once the factory settled to piece work the Toporovs discovered that the operators were "big botchers." This was new

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to the men in the shop. All through the trade it was known that the Pretifit Company had the best mechanics in the city. But the Toporovs harassed the workers every minute. On the pretext that this stitch or that seam was poorly made they brought many coats back to the operators and they had to be ripped open and sewed again.

Finally, the operators complained. "We do nothing but sew and rip, rip and sew. When Friday comes the pay envelope has twenty dollars. Take a pay like that to your wife, she'd turn her face to the wall, maybe kick you out of bed altogether.

The bosses kept buying more stock on Wall Street. They bought another hotel, too, this one in Lakewood. It was a white colonial house draped in shrubs and pines. They still came into the shop drunk and they spoke of their experiences in the speakeasies.

Early in the Spring season in 1931, in the twentieth year of the Pretifit Company, the workers stood with downcast faces. The machines were covered with greasy aprons. There was not a single bundle on the floor. Nothing but the dreary walls to look at. The bosses told them work would not begin unless they advanced more money. What had happened to the original investment, none had dared ask. They looked at one another, seeking escape through each others eyes. Two weeks wages were still due from last season and their families were hungry.

The workers gathered around the fitters' table shivering in their tattered overcoats, their hands stuck in their sleeves. The bosses chatted in the office. Max pace up and down the length of the shop, his face clouded with anger. He stopped before the bloodless operators, looked contemptuously at them, and puffed heavily at his pipe.

"Why are you silent?," he blurted suddenly. "Are your tongues paralyzed?"

The old guard approached him. "Max, let's try to iron out things. Maybe we can still revive the shop. Suppose we try to

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get a loan for the Pretifit. Otherwise we might make it worse."

"What could be worse?" Max said. "There isn't a stitch of work. Two weeks wages still unpaid. The Pretifit is dead, I tell you, a corpse. The dead sing not the Lord's praise and the Pretifit won't give you work."

"What about our investments," the workers asked as they followed him into the hallway.

"Demand your money. Protest. Don't be silent."

But the operators did not protest. Max Silverberg took them to an International Labor Defense lawyer. He investigated and found that the Pretifit Company had lost all its money in Wall Street. The cottages were deeded to their wives and the shop was buried under mortgages.

A few days later the workers came to look at the shop again. From the shop they came, to the shop they inevitably returned. The world outside was a surging chaos which refused to absorb their hungry hands.

Max met them on the street. "Where are you hurrying," he asked.

"We are going to that Pretifit brothel. Coming along?"

"No, there is a demonstration today. I must be there."

When they approached the shop, the workers saw two trucks before the building. They were loaded with sewing machines and the furnishings of a clothing factory. Two strangers were giving orders to the truckmen. The workers were shocked. It looked like the Pretifit Company loaded on the trucks.

They ran upstairs. The door was wide open. The machines were gone. Only some old broken chairs, a battered desk and a wooden packing case remained. The emptiness of the shop choked them. The slovenly wench, the Pretifit, was cold. The odor of dry rot and the smell of old hide straps filled the loft.

"It's dead!" they whispered to one another in awe. They turned to the open door. Down the stairs they trudged, cowering under the tyranny of emptiness they had left behind them.

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FOUR POEMS

In this black room, midnight and morn are each
Aeons away; the open window brings
The sea's insistent roar against the beach;
Loud in the night the hollow bellbuoy flings
Skyward its melancholy monotones;
Above the clamor of the breaking waves
Far off its lonely clapper moans
Like some despairing idiot who raves
Crawling on hands and knees through empty streets
To doors that seem familiar, there to weep.
While one unconscious twisted knuckle beats
For succor, for compassion and for sleep,
He rends the silence with a final cry
To which the stubborn night makes no reply.

New York
November 1931

2.

Mankind looks forward, but the hurt look back:
Broken of will, distracted and afraid,
They who have had no childhood but the rack
Shall yet be judged for what they've done or said.
And if their feet, once crucified, now drag,
We'll nail them once again upon our scorn:
When mankind marches, let the weak not lag,
Cursing the time and place where they were born.

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The past dies, save for those whom it has broken;
They will remember whom the world has maimed.
Let them be silent! Things must not be spoken
Which hide deep in the thought of man, ashamed:
Or, if their lips are bitter and inflamed,
Let them speak all by symbol and by token.

New York
1925

3.

Still young, our faces may deceive
Your eyes, ironic in their gaze:
Since we have learned no more to grieve
We must have entered a maturer phase.

We must be growing old; indeed,
We must, since we accept the fair
And foul, the open heart and greed,
Goodness and malice both without despair.

There was a time we pounded gates,
Called down interminable stairs,
Denounced the treachery of the fates
Who sit in darkness spinning deadly snares.

We knew the iron teeth of guilt,
Were twisted on the rack of shame,
Lived in a night that nightmares built,
Were loth to place and glad to take the blame.

O happy youth, O happy age
To whom these poisons are remote;
Whose voices, ignorant of rage,
Babble forever on an even note.

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The world is not to bless or curse;
In rain and wind, in sun and shade
Take it for better or for worse—
While we shall strike the blow that you evade.

New York
November 1931

4.

Drums of the world, beat!
beat a loud call for war against this madness!

Blue for a billion years, the sky
having seen at the world's dawn
man crawl up from slime,
still beholds the terror,
indolence, stupor, robbery, superstition,
blood and lies from age to age;
bones of butchered men cracking in the fields,
diplomacy's crooked smile,
the oppression of peoples,
cries of the poor in all times and lands,
the hatred of parents and children
(boys and girls twisted at life's gates
by the poison of unconfessed jealousy and revenge)
the struggle of nations, classes, factions, individuals;
hands that come empty into the world and leave empty.

Beat, drums of the world!
let the workers storm from the factories,
the peasants from the farms;
sweep the earth clean of this nightmare,
build new cities, a new world,
ringing with the clear voices of new men!

New York
1931
JOSEPH FREEMAN

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THE ANATOMY OF LIBERALISM

Wallace Phelps

THE ANATOMY OF CRITICISM* is hardly a major contribution to critical tradition. Genuine contributions have always been connected with new and forceful movements in literary history. This, indirectly, accounts for the far greater perspicuity of the criticism of, let us say, Dryden or Coleridge or T. S. Eliot. In America, the dominant bourgeois theories of criticism and the art practices allied to them stem from T. S. Eliot, I. A. Richards, Croce (Spingarn in America); the French Surrealists (the *transition* group in America); a group, Yvor Winters, Allen Tate, R. P. Blackmur, etc., who have fused Eliot with Imagism and regionalism; and the sociological critics, like Van Wyck Brooks or Lewis Mumford. Each of these schools grows out of an art movement ,and helps, in turn, to deepen it.

Hazlitt's method of contrasting extremes and finding the truth somewhere between, does more to illustrate a principle of balance than to strike a new and more vital vein in criticism and art. When Hazlitt tells us that "positive gains are to be made not by simply trying to prove that one side or the other is the truth, but by trying to get at the difficulty and determining in what respect and to what extent each is justified," he is presenting a method which must be grounded in social and literary realities, and which must synthesize properly selected forces or opinions. Otherwise, one can not avoid, on the one hand, the sterility of professorial discussion of art, and on the other, the pitfalls of Hegel. Hazlitt has chosen conflicting opinions, but not always dialectically antithetical ones. On Hazlitt's theory truth would always lie between the Scylla of one error and the Charybdis of another.

Through the body of the book Hazlitt present four major points: Theory of the Social Mind, The Meaninglessness of Pure Art, The Correlation of Tradition and Rebellion, The Wholeness of Criticism.

**The Anatomy of Criticism* by Henry Hazlitt. Simon and Schuster, New York, $2.50*

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The Social Mind has been Hazlitt's most commented-upon doctrine. This theory is not new, but it has not been adequately emphasized in literary criticism. In his use of the theory that individual ideas have their roots in a complete *Weltanschauung* and must be checked against that outlook, Hazlitt has made a contribution to traditional criticism. He points out, further, that though this social mind is not independent of individual minds but rather a composite of them, it alone provides the tissue from which esthetic values emerge. In other words, though value judgments of art are made by individuals, their validity is a function of the dominant standards of value, and their use for the future depends on their successful adaptation to later standards of value.

But here, too, the question is not simply one of balance, as Hazlitt seems to believe. The limits of the doctrine of the Social Mind may be seen in the faulty economics which Hazlitt uses to illustrate his point. He shows that the price of a commodity is independent of its valuation by any individual. In doing this he falls back on a supply-demand economics. By failing to observe the determining character of the amount of socially necessary labor power upon the value of a commodity, Hazlitt is left with a philosophy of chance. Similarly, in questions of art, unless one points to objective social forces, one cannot explain the changes in art values, nor the significance of those that exist at any time. Standards of art become least common denominators, to be changed by individual genius. Hazlitt can tell us that the social mind changed from the poetry of Dryden to that of Byron, or that some people are molding a proletarian literature and others believe in a relative autonomy for art, but his method gives no insight into the meaning or validity or *raison d'etre* of these group judgments.

This last hits the main inadequacy of the theory and shows that an inadequate theory may become in practice a false one. A complete social mind is a fiction, at least for those forms of society which have been composed of economic classes. At most there was a dominant social mind at any time in history. What social mind exists today that includes both a complete acceptance of the value of MacLeish, Proust, Joyce, on the one hand, and of the growing proletarian literature on the other? The former are merely in a precarious predominance over the latter.

The notion of "pure" art has been steadily undermined during the last decade. Aside from its sociological and psychological fallacies, a mere insistence on definition would make of this slogan a plea for meaninglessness in art, or as Hazlitt aptly says: "for pure poetry . . . would be at

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best an empty music, mere sound, and nonsense syllables would do as well as anything else." Consequently, any anti-Marxian critic who condemns proletarian art for having a viewpoint is committed to the absurd proposition that art is meaningless. Bonamy Dobreé, for instance, in his book *Variety of Ways* maintains that in art beliefs are irrelevant to its effectiveness. Of course, the French Symbolists, and the early Surrealists, and the *transition* group avoided this fallacy and have had an essentially sounder position in insisting that art works mean what they are and that any translation of this meaning into other symbols is a distortion. But this, too, evades the question of how art meanings, whatever they are, are related to other meanings, such as the beliefs of the artist and prevailing currents of thought. A complete refutation of this view is beyond the scope of this essay, but the reasoning of Hazlitt, insofar as it jibes with Marxism, may be used to indicate the nature of the fallacy: the term *meaning* carries no sense if it is restricted to symbols which have no valid relation to other symbols on some plane of discourse. If art has meaning, then a Marxian outlook may be part of that meaning. But Hazlitt apparently seeks to forestall this by stating, "Certainly any poetry that attempts to enforce a specific article in the conventional moral code, to bring about a specific reform, to explain a scientific theory, or in any other way falls into didacticism, is likely to be abominable." These are certainly not the kind of beliefs which Marxists advocate for literature. Proletarian literature does not "enforce a specific article"; it introduces a new way of living and seeing into literature. It does not enforce the new view; it embodies it. By using some such *reductio ad absurdum* formula, critics like Tate, Flint, and Hazlitt have been able to deny the value of any given proletarian work of art, and by conveniently forgetting the formula, they have been able to affirm the value of Eliot's or Dante's Catholic poetry, or MacLeish's anti-Communist poetry.

Hazlitt's statement that great art is at the crest of a wave of rebellion against a current of tradition is a half-truth; he begs the entire question of determining which are the most important forces of tradition and which the genuine forces of revolt. A Marxist is no longer in the dark about this. In fact, he proceeds to estimate the correct balance of this stress and strain in specific forms of proletarian literature in successive stages of its progress.

In application of his theory of the Social Mind, Hazlitt stresses the relation of any one critic to criticism as a whole. But he fails to grasp the function of criticism in its entirety, by seeing it as a mere resultant: "It

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is more than dubious to talk of the critics guiding a culture or a set of literary tendencies; because in practice the critic is just as much the child and victim of his age as the creative writer." What, then, would Hazlitt say is the function of the critic in an age of growing proletarian strength in politics, economics, and literature?

Hazlitt has presented within the limitations of half-truth a set of apparently sensible critical ideas. Whatever validity they do have comes from the assumptions they share with Marxism. These assumptions are not fulfilled because they are really derived from Hegelian idealism rather than from Marx's materialism (though Hazlitt's "synthesis" is not even Hegelian in that it is more of a compromise or composite than a real synthesis).

The idea of a social mind is found in Hegel, too, in the form of a *Zeitgeist*. It is interesting to note that Lasalle retained the social mind of Hegel; and now social-democratic theory contains Hegel's social mind and *social* consciousness instead of Marx's *class consciousness*. Social-democracy accepts even some aspects of the Marxian principle that the "social" mind is *economically* conditioned. (Hazlitt believes "economic conditions and the ideas *interact*," producing a "time-spirit".) But social-democracy, by failing to recognize the full meaning of class divisions, fails to see the proletariat as the antithetical force to the bourgeois mind (form of society). This accounts for the absence of a distinct art and culture criticism in social-democracy today. If American social-democracy were to have an explicit theory of art criticism, it would probably be somewhat like that of Henry Hazlitt: liberal, urbane, social, but non-Marxian, super-class.

In granting meaning to art and in relating the artist *qua* man to the artist *qua* artist, Hazlitt affirms for art its old vigor of content, but there is a large gap between the meanings of Proust and of, say, Grace Lumpkin's *To Make my Bread* or Conroy's *The Disinherited*. Besides, this attitude is related to the modern reaction against the currents of aestheticism, as in Gertrude Stein or Eugene Jolas. The social scene is very much before the eyes today, and most important critics champion the return of literature to this scene. Archibald MacLeish is probably the most important bourgeois poet in America today. Aside from his technical competence, his sense of social ferment and use of social objectives in his poetry is very much to the point. There has been a shift of recent years in all capitalist

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thought from philosophy to sociology, to the economic realities of life. Explicit defense of the system is taking the place of implicit bonds with the theoretical pillars of the system.

Criticism has long been concerned with the relation of the new to the old. But these categories have usually been thought of as revolt and tradition in *aesthetics*. Undoubtedly, literary currents will emerge under capitalism. But they will be nourished by the dominant bourgeois perspectives. A genuine revolt, like that of proletarian literature, has roots in a completely new outlook.

Hazlitt's emphasis on the function of criticism as an objective whole is an application of the modern scientific temper. The advance of science has provoked attempts to establish objectivity even in art criticism. Complete objectivity would require a consideration of the functions of criticism as a whole, leading, as Marxist criticism does, to a rejection of the social theories sustaining traditional literature. Failing to do this, Hazlitt's objectivity becomes, at best, a statistical one, with no basis for radical change. Hazlitt's method has produced a survey and composite of critical opinions, but it gives no insight into the philosophical presuppositions of those opinions.

Though Hazlitt occasionally admits some "class bias" in art, he assigns little value to it, and the admission is inconsistent with his leading ideas. Hence Hazlitt's critique actually involves the assumptions that art is beyond the tentacles of class problems, and that the mechanism for solving aesthetic questions is to be taken from prevailing (bourgeois) values and doctrines.

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BOOKS

POEMS: 1924-1933, *by Archibald MacLeish, Houghton Mifflin Co.*, $3.00.

WE KNOW what Archibald MacLeish thinks about Marxism. He has said it in several poems and in several essays. He has made images to express his feeling. He has spoken of Marxism as seagulls' dribbling, or the attack of a dangerous sow. His malice has been such that he had, in much recent work, abandoned his poetry to it. These attacks have been ably answered, or characterized, from the Left, but they have had the effect of making MacLeish perhaps the first poet to be mentioned when one is listing the writers of the vocal opposition or when one is thinking about Fascism in America. For this reason it is profitable to look through MacLeish's work before he began, as he puts it, to bear arms and mix in maneuvers, to see what qualities he lacks or possesses as a poet that might consign him to this role.

It is noticeable that those who have complained most loudly and with the least impressive logic at the release of new social forces in literature, have been, like MacLeish and Krutch, the champions of an insulated art. I mean those who make the only legitimate effect of a work of art the perception of its qualities, who make it remain an identity inside and outside the mind of the observer, and not translatable into any terms of non-artistic experience. "A poem should be palpable and mute as a globed fruit," MacLeish writes in *Ars Poetica.* "A poem should be equal to: not true." There is a distinction, of course, between this purism as it is developed in MacLeish's work, and other contemporary forms of aestheticism where art is made, in fact, to carry more than its proper load, where it is made the solution to non-artistic problems. In Proust, mastery of experience, of the objective world, is possible only through the passive and idealistic re-ordering of it in art. In many of the conservative poets and critics, volitional and intellectual values have been transferred from the content, which is largely negative and nostalgic, to the form. In MacLeish, aestheticism is not a solution, but an evasion, and beauty is not a result, but an alternative. At the end of the famous *Frescoes* after a good deal of unpoetic invective, he anticipates the expected replies by stating his pleasure in sensation: "There is too much sun on the lids of my eyes to be listening."

This flight from meaning to a beauty without significance is reflected not only in the larger content of MacLeish's poems, but in his rhetoric, his rhythms, his imagery. His words are never symbols, they are kept as free as possible from suggestive accretions, and images are almost never

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intensified by the effect of juxtaposition, although these are the familiar methods of poets by whom he has otherwise been influenced. Sometimes his words hit hard because of this care. In straight narration or description this connotative barrenness, the steady clicking of bright counters, grows often monotonous and unrewarding. In emotional passages it can lead to vacuity. Consider the end of this selection from the *Hamlet*:

> . . . I have suffered. I have lost
> A child, a brother, friends. And do foreknow
> My own corruption. There are also stars
> But not to listen to. And the autumn trees
> That have the habit of the sun and die
> Before times often. And at night. And skies.
> And seas. And evening.

At times this "and" rhetoric, the "words clean of the wool," the spacing, the Anglo-Saxon and Middle-English effects are used very beautifully, as many critics have pointed out. But they permit no intellectual participation on the part of the spectator. They permit one only to look and to wonder, as at the sequent events of chivalric romance. "Such a sequence of images and ideas has nothing chaotic about it," T. S. Eliot wrote of Perse's *Anabasis,* a poem to which MacLeish through all his work is greatly indebted. "There is a logic of the imagination as well as a logic of concepts." But in MacLeish's poems there is neither a conceptual nor an imaginative development; they are as static and circular as his globed fruit.

Only in the elegaic poems like *You, Andrew Marvell, Immortal Autumn* and *The Too-Late Born* do these methods support the intention. In them the remoteness of the object and the unchanging quality of the perception make such a manner right. In a poem like *Einstein,* however, which is conceptual, which plays with the irreductibility of the living Einstein to physical formulae, the lack of progression makes the elaboration merely fanciful after the first statement of the theme. In *Hamlet,* the most personal of the long poems, the same defect makes the emotionalism seem gratuitous and self-indulgent, like the posturing of O'Neill's weaklings. Because the emotions are uncontrolled and uncomprehended, they are forced to borrow implication. Not even so passive a quality as sensitivity is personal and directional in MacLeish. The Hamlet frame is used as such frames are used by other moderns like Eliot and Joyce, partly for contrast, partly to hold the thing together. The poem is essentially undramatic.

MacLeish is not unaware of the lack of meaning, of significance, within his poems. Although in his critical theories it is expressed as a

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virtue, emotionally it becomes a defect, a sterility. But the problem is faced only emotionally, not intellectually. MacLeish makes no attempt to find meaning in his own experience, in the experiences of the men of his time. Meaning is always stated as something outside himself, a quality residual in nature and savages and the past, something almost physical and alive. But the key word that may unlock the secret is, in these times, unutterable. He reproaches dead poets for not transmitting it. He gropes for it in the racial unconscious.

> It is always the same. It is always as though some
> Smell of leaves had made me not quite remember;
> As though I had turned to look and there were no one.
> It has always been secret like that with me.
> Always something has not been said.

In *Conquistador* the intellectual detachment from experience and the emotional quest for meaning find their most unified expression. The mood of the narrator is elegaic; despite all the shining immediacy of the imagery, the actions seem dream-like and arbitrary. And the nostalgia is really carried to the second degree. For although MacLeish has let us fight at the hot gates and in the salt marshes of Eliot's dry old man, although he has given us a heroism that is not of the mind, but of the muscles and intestines, we are confronted with something still more vital and abysmal in the life of the Aztecs:

> . . . . and the boy was slain!
> The belly arched to the stone knife: I remember
> They sang and were glad as a small child in the sunlight
> And they ate the limbs for a feast and the flesh trembled . . .

This respect for the wise hands of savages, the significance of names, the divination by birds, the cults of heroism and blood, comes largely from Frazier's *Golden Bough* and from Perse's *Anabasis*. It runs through the *Hamlet,* the *Pot of Earth,* and the many earth passages in the other poems. Because of MacLeish's abject intellectual surrender (remarkably demonstrated in a review of Stephen Spender's poetry in the Fall *Hound and Horn*) it has served to give a sense of mystery and emotion and terror to poems in which there is no response to the more significant experiences of reader or author. In his use of this Romantic device, MacLeish has allied himself, despite the purity of his poetic intentions, with a tendential philosophy. It is the philosophy of occultism, of the myth, the night, the chthonic denial of the reason, that Thomas Mann has described so well in his essay on Freud. It is the philosophy of Fascists.

We are interested, because of this, in noticing that with the changes

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in the political situation, there have been changes in the location of MacLeish's earth. In the earlier poems it was Asiatic in geography, and remote in time. The *American Letter* announces the poet's return to America where he must remain unless he is to live as a shadow, but a country, as MacLeish describes it, that is neither a land nor a people, a country where they do not keep words spoken in common, and where they are not like in their ways of love. And although he is not "a sold boy nor a Chinese official," the poet is filled with nostalgia for countries of a richer past. In the *Frescoes,* however, he has sifted the American soil, and found in it many things—Indians and explorers, laborers and capitalists, exploitation, struggle and hope. But as in all his work he is incapable of resolving these elements aesthetically. He presents merely imagistic evasion. To the financier brigands he can only say:

> Men have forgotten how full clear and deep
> The Yellowstone moved on the gravel and grass grew
> When the land lay waiting for her westward people!

To the revolutionaries:

> It may be she can change the word in the book . . .
> It may be that the earth and the men remain . . .

In *1933* we find more active counsels. Elpenor tells the migratory Ulysses of the depression, of plenty contrasted with want, of the impossibility of returning to what we had before, of the need of moving forward. But the way is blocked by adolescent revolutionists, by doctrinaires, teachers of hate and class war with Heaven-on-earth at the end of it, by determinists:

> Or Tiresias: he that in Hell
> Drunken with blood: foretelling the
>
> Future day by the past:
> Serving time for a master:
>
> Teaches your living selves
> That the dooms of the Fates are inevitable?
>
> You have only to push on
> To whatever it is that's beyond us
>
> Showing the flat of your sword and they'll
> Lick sand from before you!

The destination of Ulysses is not stated; it is simply another blank image, a clean place, an unploughed land under the sun.

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I think it is this quality in his solution—as much as his manifest hatred for Marxism—that makes one uneasy about MacLeish. There are obvious objections to calling such poetry Fascist; even the validity of such a classification may be in doubt. Certainly there are many bourgeois writers whose intellectual positions are much stronger bulwarks of reaction. That is because they have had will enough to give some meaning to their experience, either in terms of the bourgeois past, or of socially isolated individualism. In Germany and Italy many of them, after indirectly helping Fascism to seize power, have had too much intellectual integrity to come to terms with it. But MacLeish seems to lack the will to resolve his experience. For his non-poetic experience he demanded a program from the young men of Wall Street. In his verse there have been complementary emotional demands. And reading the poems in this volume one can imagine how the terror, the authority, the ritual, the patriotism—subrational and impulsive—that he has so constantly sought outside himself, could come at last with the marching feet of the storm troops.

OBED BROOKS

THE DISINHERITED, *by Jack Conroy. Covici-Friede,* $2.00.

In *The Disinherited* Jack Conroy has written a fine book, a very important addition to the growing body of American proletarian literature. There is no question why it is so good a book: it grows out of Conroy's own experience as a worker. He has not only observed but has also participated in proletarian life, and he has a remarkable gift for portraying that life to the reader who is remote from it. Certain episodes in the book are particularly effective: the account of the life and death of the narrator's father at the Monkey Nest coal mines, the railroad strike, the struggles of Bun Grady, the agony of the unemployed, and the stopping of the eviction. In such episodes Conroy makes us realize, as few authors have succeeded in doing, what America actually means to the average workingman. Here are characters such as we have rarely found in American literature, though we hope to see their like more and more frequently in the future.

One speaks of particular episodes in *The Disinherited* because it is in terms of episodes that one thinks of the book. Indeed, anyone who has followed Conroy's work must realize that several sections of the book were originally written as separate stories or sketches. He has done his best to weld these stories into a unified narrative, but he has not been entirely successful. The structure of the novel is as simple as possible. The story is told by the central character, Larry Donovan, who is to some extent to be identified with the author. Larry describes a series of ex-

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periences in his life: his childhood, his first job, a strike, hoboing, a steel mill, an auto factory, unemployment, migration, and so forth. Such a narrative as this, covering a considerable period of time and involving a variety of experiences, is frequently held together by the intellectual and emotional development of the central character, and this is the theme on which Conroy relies for unity. Larry is an ambitious boy, taking correspondence courses in order to get ahead. Gradually he learns that the ways of getting ahead are blocked. He begins to take more interest in the efforts of the working class to improve its position as a class, and at the end he sets out with an organizer, presumably a Communist, to fight against the capitalist system. The trouble is that Larry's development towards class-consciousness seems largely incidental. The reader's attention is not focussed on this development, but rather on Larry's experiences and observations. The book fails to give us a sense of unity, and the climax, though logical enough, does not seem to follow irresistibly from the progress of the narrative. The strength of the book lies in the pictures of proletarian life rather than in the theme, to which the pictures should be subordinated.

One can say all this and yet be profoundly glad that Jack Conroy wrote *The Disinherited,* for its faults are certainly less important than its virtues. Its weaknesses, however, must be pointed out, both for the sake of Conroy's future development and for the sake of proletarian literature. One notes, for example, that these weaknesses enabled a number of bourgeois critics to misinterpret the book, consciously or unconsciously. One reviewer, for example, dismissed Larry's decision to become an organizer with the remark that, though Larry might become militant, the author did not recommended militancy as a general solution for the workers' problems. Now anyone who knows Jack Conroy knows that he is recommending militancy to all workers, and the reviewer ought to have been bright enough to see it. But the fact remains that, because Conroy fails to sustain the analysis of Larry's development, the remark is superficially plausible. If all the excellent portrayal of workers and their lives were built around a strong and unified presentation of Larry's growth, even the stupidest reviewer could not make such a comment.

The truth is that, thus far, proletarian writers in this country have shown far less resourcefulness than is necessary. Most of them have accepted the easiest way of presenting their material, instead of trying to find the best way. So long as an author is using material that has immediate personal significance for him, he is likely to achieve, despite this slackness, an effect of authenticity and power. But growth, as the careers of many promising bourgeois writers show, requires a more substantial

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basis than an interest in one's own adventure. Proletarian authors should find it easy to outgrow this kind of immaturity, for they ought to be capable of impersonal analysis and clear understanding. There remains, however, the problem of the full and convincing presentation of their perceptions. Form is not something that is imposed upon material according to some magical formula; it is inherent in the material and in the author's attitude towards that material. But one must not think that this inherent —this essential—form reveals itself with immediate and effortless clarity. Its discovery, on the contrary, requires the most patient and thoughtful study, study of a sort that proletarian authors must learn to engage in.

GRANVILLE HICKS

WINNER TAKE NOTHING, *by Ernest Hemingway. Charles Scribner's Sons. N. Y.* $2.00.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY is a man of athletic sorrows. He began as a writer acutely dissatisfied with reality, only to succumb later to a Spartan attitude based on nothing more than his inability to apprehend reality rationally. Losing himself in the acrid, small, and uneasy happiness of pure animal feeling and external action, he developed an illusion of virility as a substitute for thought and fundamental social emotion.

In the more serious literary journals *Winner Take Nothing,* in which Hemingway's typical motifs and qualities are reproduced intact, was reviewed by the critics with almost uniform disfavor; and for the most part the reason given was an alleged falling off in the author's thematic range and psychological penetration. To the writer of these lines this reason seems but a flimsy rationalization sucked out of thin air by people trying to escape the logic behind their conclusions. These new stories of Hemingway's differ in no way from those in preceding volumes. He who is seemingly enamored of the total mode of expression represented by Hemingway violates his own preferences when he negates the significance of this collection. To my mind, the unstated logic behind the misgivings of the critics is really derived from the fact that receptivity for the Hemingway type of writing has narrowed down to a minimum. Those who, some years ago, were highly gratified by him can no longer be deeply affected by mere saturation in the sensual. In the nineteen-twenties the stimulus to "second-hand nihilism" offered by the Hemingway mode was necessary to many middle class readers whose own abject ideological poverty mirrored itself in him. Today these readers are beginning to be repelled by what formerly aroused their enthusiasm. True, he is still in full control of his formal effects—that dry and racy freshness that is almost unique in modern

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prose, the wistfulness generated by a method of capricious understatement, and the charm of his success in reducing writing to its state of nature. But these, of course, being in the main an artistic formation subtly reflecting a social formation, are powerless to arrest the withdrawal of interest at a time when the reader no longer stands solidly on the social basis reflected in the author.

Story after story recapitulates much that Hemingway has said in this earlier work. Early in the morning, Mr. Frazer, the protagonist of *Gambler, Nun, and Radio,* through whom we feel the author speaking, listens to the broadcast of a Minneapolis station, drinks beer and pictures to himself the "Morning Revellers" coming to the studio at daybreak as they get off the street-car with the instruments tucked under their arms. The story infects us with a real life-feeling for the radio, but further on Mr. Frazer indulges in wide comments on the most advanced social-hygienic conception of religion in existence: "What about sexual intercourse; was that an opium of the people," Yes, and what about drink and liberty and ambition and bread and music and economics? Mr. Hemingway is very good when he writes about radios.

A proletarian critic's evaluation of Hemingway's subject matter and detailed content cannot but show its uselessness to the proletarian writer. None the less, though in his case as in all others, content determines form, it would he sheer "left" doctrinairism wholly to discard the cluster of formal creative means which he evolved. The principle that content determines form, if exaggerated, reduces itself to an absurdity, and withal a very dangerous absurdity, for it makes the proletarian artist insensible to those few— largely external—features of contemporary bourgeois art that are class determined in such a slender and remote manner as to render them available for use by the creator of the new art who is seeking an effective artistic method (since the implicit danger of ideological inoculation is very small). I doubt whether it is at present possible to generalize in defining the few features of decadent bourgeois art that can be taken over by the proletariat. As yet, in treating this problem, we have to confine ourselves to individual cases or literary schools whose homogeneity can be easily identified.

In its present stage much of proletarian-revolutionary writing in America is marked by a certain mawkish idealization and sentimentality that repels rather than convinces the reader. Some of our writers, possibly, have not learned as yet how to restrain themselves from intruding upon their material. Emotion should be a driving force and a point of departure, not a creative anaesthetic. He who is intoxicated cannot turn a sharp corner. In Hemingway we find a certain supple precision and

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impersonality of method which, if selectively assimilated, could prove of great benefit to the proletarian writer who more often than not is overpowered by the immensity of his theme.

Hemingway represents an important variation in modern bourgeois sensibility. His work re-creates the types of man for whom the problems of social existence in the chaos of the capitalist order are so trying that they finally disintegrate in him any attempt at an intellectual apprehension of causes. Merely looking at effects, this type develops a hankering for the primitive innocence of sensual life and surrenders to a personal morality embracing a few simple facts. Hemingway's obsession with the theme of death and the psychology of pure, rather than conspicuous, consumption pervading his stories and novels flow from the amoral and asocial ideology of the top section of the bourgeoisie in the era of moribund capitalism. The character of his people has always been marginal to the class whence they spring; he has never faced a class type in his essence, in the sense that Clyde Griffiths, Stephen Daedalus or Hans Castorp are such.

Klaus Mann has spoken of Hemingway's charm as being that of "an American boy." If we understand Mann's phrase in relation to the existing class domination in America, as meaning an average bourgeois-minded American boy, then it is quite clear that this sort of charm speaks eloquently of severe intellectual limitations. And to become a devotee of the utterly quixotic ideal of life as a "clean cut" private *sport* from whose orbit everything is excluded save drinking, hunting and copulating is to illustrate the point.

PHILIP RAHV

LEFT FRONT, *Revolutionary Art of the Midwest. Organ of the John Reed* Clubs of the middle west, published bi-monthly at 1475 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Edited by Bill Jordan. Volume 1, Number 3. 10 cents.

THE ANVIL, Stories for Workers. Edited by Jack Conroy in Moberly, Missouri. Volume 1, Number 4. 15 cents.

BLAST, Proletarian Short Stories. Edited by Fred R. Miller in New York City. Volume 1, Number 3. 20 cents.

DYNAMO, A Journal of Revolutionary Poetry, edited by S. Funaroff, Herman Spector, Joseph Vogel and Nicholas Wirth, New York City. Volume 1, Number 1. 15 cents.

HERE ARE FOUR little magazines, all of them recent arrivals on the American literary scene, which prove—despite the sneers and sarcasm of the literary liberals—the growing vitality of revolutionary writing in

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America. All of them are slim—they range in size from 16 to 32 pages—but within their limited space appear more advanced contributions to revolutionary fiction and poetry than have appeared in any American magazine for a long time.

Left Front claims the real distinction of being the first of the sectional John Reed Club magazines, which now includes *The Partisan* (Hollywood), *Red Pen* (Philadelphia) and *Partisan Review. Its* primary appearance in the field has enabled its editors to progress from the publication of an imitative, pseudo-modern format to the striking professional appearance which *Left Front* presents today. Moreover, in addition to this decided advance, the editors of *Left Front* apparently have resolved the status and character of their publication. It is exactly what its subtitle claims for it: the organ of the John Reed Clubs of the Middle West. In its twenty large pages can be found such excellent documentary articles as Edith Margo's *The South Side Sees Red,* a praiseworthy examination of the awakening to militant class struggle of the great Negro population of Chicago; such competent stories as J. S. Balch's *A Drink of Water* and Tom Butler's *The Strike Comes to Thorne Run;* noteworthy reportage on the midwestern farm struggles by Ben Field and Obed Brooks, and book reviews by Joseph Kalar, Orrick Johns, Bill Jordan, Jack Conroy and others. The poetry does not approach the standards set by the other departmens, although *Prelude* is the most promising poem by William Pillin that I have seen. And since it is the prelude to a longer series of poems entitled *North America* one hopes for greater poetic achievement from Pillin's pen. Henry George Weiss's *Negro Ditch Digger* is impressionistic verse, distinguished neither in technique nor in meaning. Richard Wright's *Rest for the Weary* and *A Red Love Note* reveal genuine feeling and potential power, but they are manifestos to the ruling class, affirmations of class-power and self-identification by the author (a young Negro poet) with the working class; they are *not* poetry.

The Anvil, edited from Moberly, Missouri by that most indefatigable of revolutionary literary editors, Jack Conroy, is a magazine composed solely of short stories and verse. It's function is simpler than that of *Left Front,* since it is purely an outlet for creative revolutionary literary expression, with no ties to any closely-knit organization such as the John Reed Club. The January-February number contains stories by Samuel Gaspar, John C. Rogers, J. S. Balch, Alfred Morang and two newcomers: Harriet Hassell and Robert O. Erisman. Of all the stories, Alfred Morang's *Death in the Rain* and Balch's *Telephone Call* impress me most. Morang, particularly deserves close attention; his growth within

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the past year has been steady and certain, and he is gradually eliminating some of the immaturities which marred his earlier stories. The verse in *The Anvil* is painfully sincere but, with the exception of two poems by Walter Snow and Edwin Rolfe, of little value as poetry.

Three unusual stories appear in the third number of *Blast* edited in New York City by Fred R. Miller. W. C. Williams' *The Dawn of Another Day* is an erratic, unclear, but nevertheless significant story about a penniless young man, one of the middle class ruined by the crisis, who realizes his new class position in society through a sensuous-mystical contact with a woman of the working class, a Negro woman. The story is pictorially effective, and makes use of conversation in a manner which very few American writers, least of all revolutionary writers, have mastered. But the disparity between the satisfying prose and the amorphous, unclear ideological approach makes this story a failure, if we are to take Blast's subtitle, "proletarian short stories" seriously. Because of the unresolved nature of his approach, Williams uses the figures of the Negro woman as the symbol of uprooted identity with reality. D. H. Lawrence attempted a similar semi-personal, semi-mystical identity with reality, and failed. Even though to Williams the reality of woman symbolizes class-consciousness, the connection is far too tenuous and personal to hold meaning for the reader.

Richard Bransten has something of the same respect for sensuous detail that Williams possesses. The use of it in his story *Misdeal* partly redeems the stereotyped situation with which he deals—that of a young man who, losing his job, is forced into the growing mass of workers who begin to question the very basis of capitalist society. But the occasional vigor and fine observation of the earlier parts of the story are lost sight of in the trite culmination of the tale.

Alfred Morang's contribution to this issue of *Blast* is a short and slight but well-integrated short story, *Free Slaves*. One other story should be listed here, *Hackman* by Harry Kermit, a competent narrative the imaginative meagreness of wnich is redeemed by excellent reportorial detail.

The first issue of *Dynamo, a journal of revolutionary poetry* justifies the long period of its preparation, during which many of its well-wishers thought it had met a pre-natal end. It is the smallest of all the magazines we have discussed, and at the same time the most mature, sober, unpretentious. Not only have its editors collected in its 24 small pages some extremely significant literary contributions; they have also, as these very contributions reveal, set a high standard of literary merit which is sorely needed in revolutionary literature. It is a standard which proves that

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revolutionary literature—or, more precisely, in the case of *Dynamo,* revolutionary poetry—has definitely passed its hit-and-miss, catch-as-catch-can period.

Haakon M. Chevalier, Horace Gregory, Michael Gold, Joseph Freeman, Isidor Schneider, Kenneth Fearing and Stanley Burnshaw contribute to this issue the best collection of revolutionary poetry which has appears since the publication of *We Gather Strength.* James T. Farrell, whose third novel, *The Young Manhood of Studs Lonigan,* is to appear this month, is represented with a short story, *The Buddies.*

It is unnecessary, I believe, to dwell long on the merits of the respective poems. All of them achieve a satisfying standard of poetic achievement. I should like here merely to examine briefly the six poems by Joseph Freeman and to recommend them for serious study both by poets and by readers of poetry—particularly the former group. Freeman, an excellent lyricist, offers in this group of poems an intensely personal series which at the same time varies and broadens our conception of what revolutionary poetry can be. While many poets who have been publishing their verse within the past five years have been content with what might be called revolutionary exhibitionism in verse, satisfied with the mere affirmation in their work of their identity with the working class or of their faith in Communism, Freeman has gone far beyond this. Although he has published very little during the past half-dozen years, his development as a poet, as his *Six Poems* written over a period of eight years reveal, use the acceptance of the class struggle—the goal for most of our poets—as a beginning; from this beginning, he progresses to a treatment of the limitless human problems—hope, doubt, anger, fear, pain—which have never before been adequately treated in revolutionary poetry. Instead of the grandiosely general, Freeman deals with the specific and achieves both by implication and direct statement more of the general meaning of the problems with which he deals than all of our younger poets.

This is not to say that Joseph Freeman is—at least in these poems—an accomplished poet. He still writes in the too-facile manner and forms of an outgrown method; his thought is too often dulled and blunted by convenient and traditional phrases. But his authentic poetic feeling emerges as the clearest and most honest statement of the revolutionary poet's preoccupations that has as yet been published in this country.

WALDO TELL

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JOHN REED CLUB

The John Reed Club of New York is at present organizing a Writer's School, with classes to start February 19th. The following workshop courses will be given for a period of three months by four noted writers, with the assistance of guest lecturers.

Marxism and Literature — Joshua Kunitz.
Poetry—Horace Gregory.
Fiction—Edward Dahlberg.
English Prose — Kenneth Burke

The office is open for registration every afternoon from 3 to 5 o'clock and every evening from 7 to 8:30.

There have been many requests from writers, students and intellectuals for courses such as these. For further information apply to the John Reed Club Writers School, second floor, 430 6th Ave., N. Y. C.

The New York John Reed Club School of Art covers practically every phase of art instruction: sculpture, fresco, life class, children's class, and political cartooning.

In the two years of its existence the school has commanded widespread interest. Art students have come to feel that technical training must serve only as a preparation for expressing ideas of social value. The instructors are such well known artists as Louis Lozowick, Reginald Marsh, Raphael Soyer, H. Glintenkamp, Nikolai Cikovsky, and Robert Minor.

In addition to the excellent technical training, a series of illustrated lectures is being given by Louis Lozowick on "A Marxian History of Art." These lectures are given every other Wednesday.

For further information apply to Martha Pearse, Secretary, John Reed Club School of Art, 430 6th Ave., New York City.

During the course of the year the John Reed Club of New York will issue a series of literary pamphlets. "Towards a Proletarian Literature" by Obed Brooks and Granville Hicks, and "Fascism and Culture" by John Strachey are scheduled for early publication.

The Writers Group is holding a series of Sunday night lectures and symposiums at the club headquarters 430 Sixth Avenue, New York City, on literary and general cultural problems in their relation to the revolutionary movement. Albert Maltz, Clifton Fadiman, V. J. Jerome, Stephen Graves, James Burnham, Joseph Freeman and a number of other prominent speakers are scheduled to address coming meetings.

The Fourth Anniversary Celebration of the founding of the John Reed Club of New York—the first of the John Reed Clubs in America—will be held on March 25, 1934. This affair will climax four years of revolutionary activity in the sphere of literature an dart. Leading writers and artists have been invited to participate.

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John Reed Clubs throughout the country are urged to send notes on their activities to the Editors of PARTISAN REVIEW for publication in future issues.

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